

ASIAN AMERICAN PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH

ADVANCING LEADERS THROUGH COLLABORATION

ASIAN AMERICAN/PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH

Asian American and Pacific Islanders' rich heritage spans the world and depths of America's history.

Generation after generation of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have established a proud legacy that reflects the spirit of our Nation—a country that values the contributions of everyone who calls America home.

During Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month, the Department of Defense (DoD) celebrates the accomplishments of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders to both the Nation and the DoD mission.



COMMEMORATIVE MONTH ORIGIN

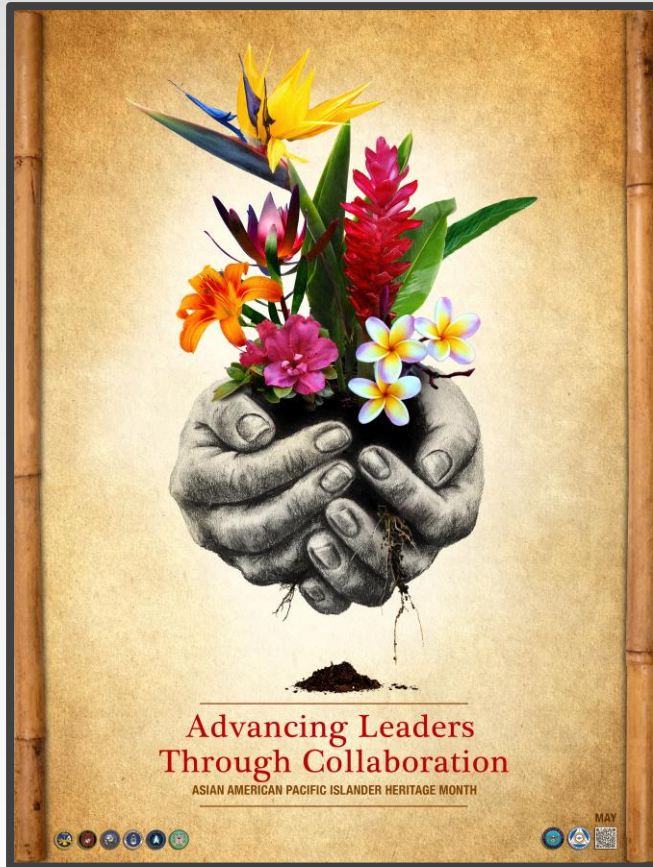
In 1978, a joint congressional resolution established Asian/Pacific Islander Heritage Week.

May was chosen to commemorate two milestones in Asian/Pacific American history which occurred in the month: the first known Japanese immigrant's arrival to the U.S. on May 7, 1843, and the completion of the transcontinental railroad on May 10, 1869 — which was built by over 20,000 Chinese workers.



In 1992, Congress expanded the observance to a month.

POSTER/PRESENTATION



The Federal Asian Pacific American Council chose the 2022 theme: *“Advancing Leaders Through Collaboration.”*

This presentation provides snapshots highlighting four individuals who embody this year’s theme: Dr. Chien-Shiung Wu, Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Jonathan Kong, Public Health Services Vice Admiral Vivek Murthy, and U.S. Coast Guard Lieutenant Commander Christine Torres Igisomar.

DR. CHIEN-SHIUNG WU (1 of 2)



Chien-Shiung Wu earned many nicknames throughout her years as a physicist, including “The First Lady of Physics,” and “Madame Wu.”

Her pioneering work is regarded as a standard among physicists today. She has inspired generations of physicists with her research.

After retirement, she focused on encouraging young girls to pursue STEM careers through educational programs.

DR. CHIEN-SHIUNG WU (2 of 2)

In 1944, Wu joined the Manhattan Project. The project was a classified government initiative during World War II to produce the first atomic weapon for the United States. Her efforts with the project proved invaluable.

In 1957, her male colleagues were awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics for their work. Like many women's contributions in science at the time, her impacts were not acknowledged.

Although denied the Nobel Prize, she received many honors during her career including: being the seventh woman elected into the National Academy of Sciences; receiving the Comstock Prize in Physics from the National Academy of Sciences; and being the American Physical Society's first woman president.

PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS JONATHAN KONG (1 of 2)



In 2011, while on his second tour deployment to Afghanistan, Navy corpsman Jonathan Kong's platoon was ambushed by the Taliban as the Marines patrolled the village of Kotozay. A Marine was shot in the chest.

In 2014, Kong was awarded the Silver Star for saving the this wounded Marine's life.

According to the citation, Kong *"courageously rushed from his covered position, boldly charged into the kill zone dodging a hail of bullets, and reached the casualty."*



PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS JONATHAN KONG (2 of 2)

He later said, *“When a Marine gets hit, you don’t really think....You get so close you’re family, so you have to help.”*

His mother, with whom he spoke to on the phone while deployed, had no idea what he had endured. He told her things were *“quiet, really boring.”* When she received word of the honor he was to receive, she was surprised.



Kong left the Navy after six years to pursue a career in emergency medicine.

VICE ADMIRAL VIVEK MURTHY (1 of 2)



Vice Admiral Vivek Hallegere Murthy is a physician in the United States Public Health Service Commissioned Corps.

He has served as the United States' 19th and 21st Surgeon General under President Barack Obama and currently serving President Joe Biden.

He is the first surgeon general of Indian descent. During his first term as surgeon general, he was the youngest active duty flag officer in federal uniformed service.

VICE ADMIRAL VIVEK MURTHY (2 of 2)

As the Nation's Doctor, Murthy's mission is to provide clear, consistent guidance, and resources for the public by relying on the best scientific information available.

He commands a uniformed service of 6,700 health officers. Their mission is delivering care to protect, promote, and advance the health of our nation both within the United States and abroad.

Murthy believes that our nation's greatest strength has always come from its people. Improving the health of our people means strengthening our communities and our country. He said, *"I have come to believe that America is a promise we have made to one another."*

LCDR CHRISTINE TORRES IGISOMAR (1 of 2)

A native Chamorro, Christine Igisomar was born and raised on the island of Saipan, in the U.S. Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, a U.S. territory in the Pacific.

In 2002, she enlisted in the U.S. Coast Guard after high school and served a year aboard a Coast Guard cutter in Seattle. She was then selected to attend the Naval Academy Preparatory School in Newport, Rhode Island. She entered the Coast Guard Academy one year later, graduating in 2008.



LCDR CHRISTINE TORRES IGISOMAR (2 of 2)

In October 2019, Igisomar was promoted to lieutenant commander. She is the first Chamorro woman to achieve this rank in the Coast Guard. In 2020, she became the first Pacific Islander to serve as Aide to the U.S. Coast Guard Commandant.

For her leadership style she turned to the Chamorro spirit of inafa'maolek, meaning *“harmony,”* or in her definition, *“make it good.”*

“Approach every meeting, challenge and training opportunity in the spirit of making it good,” Igisomar said. *“I found that whenever I did that, people around me started doing it too.”*



CONCLUSION

As we celebrate Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, we pay tribute to all the Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders who have strived and fought for a brighter future for the next generation of leaders.



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